

## BE AWARE OF WHAT IS EYE-LEVEL FOR KIDS

Many grocery stores place products with “kid appeal” right at their eye level. Notice that the colorful, sugar-sweetened cereals are conveniently located where kids can easily see them. Many products use cartoon characters to get their attention as well. If you are shopping with kids, talk to them about foods and ask them to help select the healthier choice.

## SNACK AND SODA AISLES

According to the USDA Economic Research Services, thousands of new products are introduced each year. About half of these new products are in the “gum, candy & snack” or “beverage” categories. These products can be high in solid fat, sodium, and added sugars. Stay focused and only purchase what is on your list.

## KEEP IT SAFE WHILE SHOPPING

Separate raw meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood from other foods in your grocery cart and in shopping bags at checkout. Always put these products in separate plastic bags so that their drippings and juices don't contaminate other foods or your shopping bags.

If using reusable shopping bags, make sure to wash them frequently because they can harbor harmful bacteria.

Check dates on packaged produce, deli, dairy, meat, poultry & seafood items before purchasing.

Properly store all refrigerated foods promptly after grocery shopping. Perishable foods (milk, fresh meat & seafood, etc.) should not be left at room temperature for longer than 2 hours (or 1 hour when the temperature is above 90° F). This 2-hour window includes the amount of time food is in the grocery cart, car, and on the kitchen counter.

CHECKOUT

## ADDITIONAL SHOPPING RESOURCES

FDA Nutrition Facts Label Resource  
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/NFLPM/default.htm>

Food Product Dating  
[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact\\_Sheets/Food\\_Product\\_Dating/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Food_Product_Dating/index.asp)

Food Safety Tips  
[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Basics\\_for\\_Safe\\_Food\\_Handling.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Basics_for_Safe_Food_Handling.pdf)

Nutrition.gov - Shopping, Cooking & Meal Planning  
<http://www.nutrition.gov/shopping-cooking-meal-planning>

Recipe Finder  
<http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>



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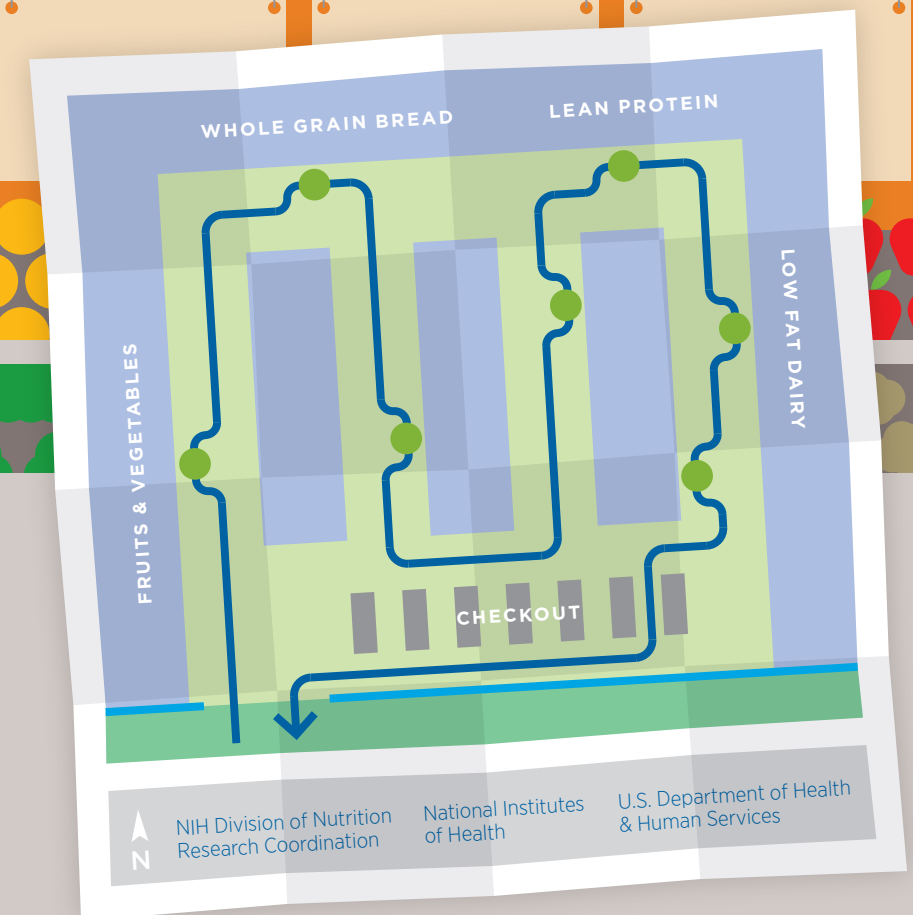
NIH Division of Nutrition Research Coordination  
National Institutes of Health  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

<http://dnrc.nih.gov>

National Nutrition Month was created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

## MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH NAVIGATING THE GROCERY STORE: NO GPS REQUIRED

Your guide for healthier and more economical food shopping



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U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

<http://dnrc.nih.gov>

## HEALTHY EATING

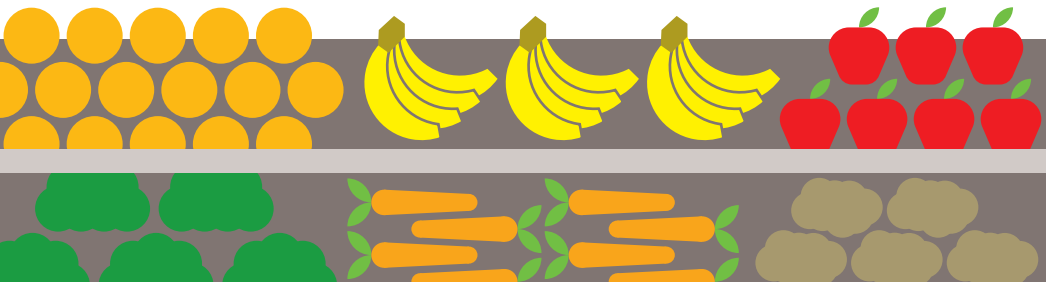
Healthy eating begins at the grocery store (or anywhere you purchase food). The products you put in your cart impact what you eat throughout the week and can affect your family's health. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010* encourage Americans to limit their intakes of solid fats, sodium (salt), and added sugars. A typical grocery store has as many as 40,000 items, many of which may be very tempting. Plan before you shop to avoid spur of the moment purchases. Here are some tips to help guide you through your next grocery shopping trip.

### BEFORE YOU GO

Make a grocery list based on a meal plan for the week. This will help you resist the urge to make unplanned purchases.

Be sure to check your kitchen's inventory before you shop so you buy only what you need.

Eat a healthy meal or snack before you go since food tends to look more appetizing on an empty stomach.



## START WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

The colorful display of fruits and vegetables makes the produce section an inviting first stop. Because eating fruits and vegetables can reduce the risk for many chronic diseases, we are encouraged to make half our plate fruits and vegetables.

There is no need to limit purchases to fresh fruit and vegetables, however. Buy what is in season in the fresh section (which is likely more affordable) and keep other items on your list for when you head to the dried, frozen and canned food aisles. Just look for varieties prepared with minimal solid fats, added sugars, and sodium.

## MAKE HALF YOUR GRAINS WHOLE

As you make your way through cereal and grain products aisles, look for whole grain items. The *Dietary Guidelines* recommend that at least half of your grain servings be whole grain. Whole grains include the entire grain seed (bran, germ, and endosperm). When a grain is refined, some of the bran and germ are removed, resulting in a loss of dietary fiber and certain nutrients, such as B vitamins and iron.



Some products make it clear on the front of the package with a statement such as "100% whole grain" or by displaying the whole grain stamp from the Whole Grains Council.

Foods labeled with the words "multi-grain," "stone ground," "cracked wheat," or even "100% wheat" may not contain any whole grain.

Check the ingredient list. The whole grain should be the first or second ingredient after water.



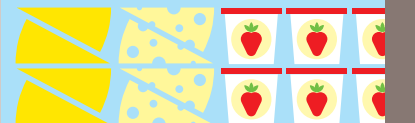
## GO FOR FAT-FREE OR LOW-FAT DAIRY

The dairy group includes milk, cheese, yogurt and fortified soy beverages. Dairy foods contribute nutrients such as protein, calcium, potassium, and vitamin D. Read the Nutrition Facts label, and keep these tips in mind.

Choose fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) dairy products. They provide the same nutrients but with fewer calories and less saturated fat.

Dairy naturally contains sugar (lactose), but many flavored milks and yogurts are sweetened with added sugars. Check the ingredients and compare Nutrition Facts labels.

Keep an eye on sodium. In addition to being high in fat, many cheeses are high in sodium. Read labels to compare products. Cheeses that are naturally lower in sodium include Swiss cheese and ricotta.



## KEEP YOUR PROTEIN LEAN

Protein foods include seafood, meat, poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds. Whether buying fresh, canned or frozen, here are a few tips to keep selections lean and add variety to your diet.

Try to eat seafood at least twice a week and choose seafood rich in omega-3 fatty acids such as trout or salmon. Pregnant women, nursing mothers, and young children should not eat tilefish, shark, swordfish, and king mackerel because they are high in methyl mercury, and they should also limit white tuna (albacore) to 6 ounces per week because of its higher methyl mercury content.

Be a "flexitarian"—make beans, peas, and soy products your main dish or part of a meal.

Skinless chicken breasts and turkey cutlets are the leanest poultry choices.

The leanest cuts of beef include round steaks and roasts (eye of round, top round, bottom round, round tip) top loin, top sirloin, and chuck shoulder and arm roasts.

When buying ground meat, look for extra lean or lean on the label.

Check the Nutrition Facts label for saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium content of packaged foods. Many meat and poultry items contain added salt solutions, and processed meats such as hams, sausages, hotdogs, and deli meats have added sodium too.



## SHOULD I BUY ORGANIC? WHAT DOES THE LABEL MEAN?

An organic label does not mean the product is more nutritious. The benefits of eating fruits and vegetables exist regardless of whether they are organic or not. The term "organic" refers to the way that agricultural products are grown and processed. Organic farmers use practices that promote sustainability and minimize the negative impact on the environment. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established an organic certification program that requires all organic foods to meet strict government standards. For more information, visit: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop>